

OECS EDUCATION REFORM UNIT (OERU)

TEACHERS' GUIDE FOR LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM GRADES - K - VI

[Draft For comment]

I. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of the Teachers' Guide

The Teachers' Guide is intended as a resource for teachers of Grades K through VI in primary schools in the OECS territories. It was designed by teachers, teacher educators, and curriculum officers from the OECS territories for use by their colleagues who teach language arts. The Guide is the companion document to the Harmonized Curriculum in which the learning outcomes for Grades K to VI are set out. The Guide translates the theoretical principles of an integrated curriculum into practical activities that teachers can use to help students develop the abilities listed in the learning outcomes of the Harmonized Curriculum. Teachers will find the Guide to be a helpful resource. It includes:

- a. some background information and explanatory notes about the main domains and other concepts in the Language Arts;
- b. notes on language varieties and suggestions for teachers on helping children with different language backgrounds develop proficiency in school language;
- c. suggestions for varying interaction patterns with learners so as to enable each learner to become an active participant in the learning process;
- d. suggestions for classroom management procedures and suggestions for ways in which teachers can provide individual attention while ensuring that the needs of all children are adequately met;
- e. some information about using collaborative groups, the purposes, benefits of collaborative grouping and how teachers might go about using such groups for instructional purposes;
- f. sample activities that illustrate how selected concepts in the Harmonized Curriculum can be taught;
- g. notes on various teaching and learning concepts with practical suggestions that teachers can use;
- h. samples of integrated units for the different grade levels;
- i. a glossary of terms and suggestions for supplementary reading for the different grade levels.

This list is not exhaustive. Teachers will find The Teachers' Guide to be a comprehensive document that explains important teaching and learning concepts and provides practical suggestions for teaching. Most important, the Guide explains the principles of integrating the language arts and provides suggestions for integrating the language arts with subjects across the curriculum so that teachers may begin to introduce this approach gradually.

The organization of material in The Teachers' Guide is intended to help teachers find the information they need quickly. Information and explanatory notes about concepts are provided in the first section. The second section includes additional sample activities for teaching selected areas in the various domains for all grades. This is intended to supplement the activities listed in the third column of the learning outcomes section of the curriculum. This section is followed by samples of integrated units for all the grade levels. The penultimate section provides information on various forms of assessment with practical suggestions of the types of assessment that teachers can use for the various domains. The relationship between evaluation and assessment is also discussed in this section and suggestions are given for implementing continuous assessment in an integrated programme. The last section includes the glossaries and supplementary reading lists for students and teachers. The appendices consist of sample assessment forms and logs that teachers can use to keep efficient records of learner performance.

1.2 The integrated curriculum

The concept of integration may not be as 'strange' or 'foreign' as one might think. It is possible that several teachers already use a form of integration without using this specific designation to describe what they do. Integration simply means presenting the concepts in the various domains in the language arts in such a way that learners can see the relationship between them and the relationship of all of their learning to real life. The tendency has been to compartmentalize learning so that students sometimes fail to see the relationship between reading and writing, listening and speaking or the relationship between reading, listening, speaking and writing. The timetable has been used to help with the organization of the school day and to ensure that teachers cover all the subjects that students are required to do. In many instances, timetables that set up subjects in discrete time slots of thirty to forty five minutes have functioned to compartmentalize instruction. When these timetables are followed slavishly and students are asked to discontinue an activity in which they may be engrossed at the end of a time period in order to begin one on a different subject, their learning rhythm is disrupted, they may not get back to the activity with the same degree of interest and in the same depth and they may go on to the new activity without the interest and motivation that they need to engage in this activity in an enthusiastic way. This pattern, continued over time, militates against the learning of concepts in a holistic way.

The potential damage of rigidly adhering to the fixed time slots in this way becomes evident when we observe the separation of concepts like Reading and Comprehension in different time slots. It raises the question as to the nature of activities that students are asked to engage in during reading and comprehension. Meaningful reading involves comprehension or understanding and for understanding to happen one needs to be able to read fluently, a process which involves being able to figure out sound symbol correspondences, in short, to decode, and to pay attention to the words on the page. However, decoding can become a meaningless activity to students if it is constantly relegated to drills done in rote fashion and is done out of the context of reading materials that are interesting to the students. It therefore becomes important to reconsider what is

involved in *reading* and to establish a practice that will help students become excellent readers.

All the other subjects that students have to learn involve reading. Inability to read has a negative impact on learning. Students often fall behind and in some cases drop out from school. Reading, therefore, has to be a central activity in all the grades, but most especially in the early grades. A lot of time needs to be spent on helping learners to read in the early grades. This involves reading a lot to the children, allowing them to have opportunities to explore books, engage in activities related to the reading that is done, learning to decode and to develop decoding strategies within the context of a rich reading programme so that they soon become fluent and efficient readers. Reading is a central part of an integrated programme, and learners develop all the other related skills, namely of oral communication and writing in relation to each other. In an integrated programme there is no separation of reading and comprehension on the timetable as though these are two separate and distinct activities.

- What then, are the principles of an integrated curriculum? Such a curriculum is one that
- & introduces the learner to concepts in the different domains or strands of the language arts in such a way that the learner can see the relationship between the concepts;
 - & encourages the learner to become an active participant in the learning process;
 - & links activities in the different domains and in cross curricular subjects so that the learner can see the meaningfulness and connectedness of the concepts he/she is asked to learn in school as well as the relatedness of these concepts to real life;
 - & helps the learner to use language in a meaningful way and to access information in other subject areas;
 - & provides the learner with enough time to complete tasks and to solve problems so that the learner gets a sense of completion and achievement in the completion of specific tasks.

In an integrated curriculum teachers read to students often, students read to teachers, to the whole class, to their classmates in small groups and individually. Students also have many opportunities to express their ideas and their responses to the materials that they read, to comment on the books that they read and on the writing of their classmates, to write and to respond to literature in a variety of ways. In short, the integrated curriculum fosters the development of every student's ability to be:

- § a confident speaker who can select the language code that is most appropriate to a given situation as well as adjust the language based on the situation and context of communication;
- § an expert reader who can read and understand different types of text and express a response (make a comment about) them;
- § a good writer who can use school language to express his /her ideas clearly and in well-formed sentences of the language.

In addition, within the context of such an approach, students learn to be tolerant, to listen to the views of others and to respond in acceptable ways even though they may disagree with a particular view.

The Introduction to the Harmonized Curriculum cited Jane Hansen's principles¹ of Time, Choice, Response, Structure and Community as important cornerstones of an integrated curriculum. As you read the introduction to the Curriculum, take a little time to reflect on your own teaching practice. Use the checklist in Appendix 1 to determine whether you follow some of the basic principles of an integrated approach.

2. Language variation and diversity

2.1 Language varieties in the Caribbean

The Caribbean is blessed with several language and dialect varieties that make it an interesting region for linguistic study and for visitors who find this multilingual uniqueness an attraction. In most of the countries within the OECS English is the official language, that is, it is used for the official business of state and for purposes of education. However, in almost all of these countries, the majority of people also speak a dialect of English, which is a non-standard variety. This is so today even in countries like St. Lucia and Dominica. Because of historical circumstances, a French Creole is also spoken in these two territories. Until recently, the majority of people spoke French Creole and many were monolingual speakers of that variety. However, more people now speak a variety of English in addition to French Creole. In some families in which French Creole was the only language spoken, the children acquired this as their first language and came to school knowing how to communicate only in French Creole. Now, children in these two territories enter school being able to speak French Creole or a non-standard dialect or English or Standard English or a combination of all three. In Dominica, a group of people also speak another variety called Kokoy, so there are children who are able to speak that variety as well.

For those children of the region who speak only French Creole or Kokoy, the experience of school must be challenging especially when they are expected to begin to communicate in English and to use it to learn their subjects. This must be a difficult task especially if little or nothing is done to acknowledge their home language [i.e. their native language, what they first acquired] or to nurture it or to help them to use it as a stepping stone to acquiring English. But the business of learning English for school purposes and to develop literacy in it is a challenge even for speakers of an English lexicon dialect and often for children who speak "Standard English". This is because acquiring literacy and the language of literacy involves a different process from simply acquiring a first language. So the business of acquiring book or decontextualised language, which is the language for academic or school success is at best challenging for most children, especially those who have had no experience of books before they come to school. But consider that it must be even more challenging for the speaker of Kokoy or of French Creole who must first go through the process of acquiring English for communication and then acquire the use of school [decontextualised or book] language in school for them to be able to participate with any measure of success in school life. Even the speakers of an English based dialect face challenges as they attempt to acquire literacy.

So far, our educational systems have not given serious thought as to how we can best help these children who do not speak English as a first language, because we proceeded on the erroneous assumption that the best way to help them was to stamp out their native language. We thought so,

¹ Hansen, J. (1987). When Writers Read. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.

because there was a stigma attached to the non-standard varieties; we thought they were not “as good as” English. However, research has shown us that we could harm speakers of a language when we display negative attitudes to that language and when we try to eradicate it without offering sound alternatives for acquiring the second language in a supportive environment. More important than that, research has shown that we can help these speakers to gain cognitive flexibility and to develop literacy in the school language if we take their language into consideration and help them to read in that language even as they learn to communicate in English. Our goals as educators must be to enable our richest resource, our people, our children, to function as fully contributing citizens in their territories and as citizens of the world. And, in order to do this, we must help them to become literate and to cope with the technological advances which are fast becoming primary means of communication.

2.1.1. Catering to the needs of children with diverse first language backgrounds

In the introduction to the Learning Outcomes for the K – Grade II document some suggestions are made for ways in which we can begin to make the transition to school life easier for non-native speakers of English. The main points are reiterated here.

1. We need to give the non-standard English-speaking child as many opportunities to answer questions and to make oral contributions as we give to English-speaking children. We should acknowledge the child’s response when these contributions are made in the child’s native language.
2. To help the child acquire English for school purposes, we have to provide concrete contexts for the child to learn and apply the vocabulary of English. We must help the child to see what is being referred to, what the names of things are, what exactly is being talked about. If we use the child’s language judiciously to help the child to feel part of the activity and not simply be a spectator of a teaching event, we will be helping the child to become a contributing participant to the class and we will be providing the nurturing environment that the child needs to take risks to learn the school language.
3. For the children who speak only French Creole, we need to do much more, such as include an hour of instruction in French Creole for the purpose of teaching the child to read French Creole. The activities and approaches suggested in the curriculum for English will apply just as well to French Creole but the instruction has to be in the French Creole. The rest of the teaching time can be spent with the English activities that have been described that will help the child to acquire English for communicative purposes and literacy. The literacy skills developed in the first language French Creole will facilitate the acquisition of literacy skills in English. This may seem to be a revolutionary suggestion, but consider, we are recommending one hour in the child’s language initially that will pay dividends in the long run. An actual programme for developing the bilingual abilities of children in this way is outlined in a little more detail below and those countries that have an interest in incorporating these approaches in a more systematic way may refer inquiries to the OERU office. However, for those who are skeptical about the efficacy of the suggested method, the measures in (4) are recommended.
4. For the children who speak French Creole, include in your story reading each day at least a story in French Creole and encourage the child to give a response to that story as you would have English-speaking child respond to literature in English [i.e. along the lines suggested in the curriculum]. In addition, you could tell the story in English after the French Creole reading to give all the children an opportunity to respond to it. The French

- Creole child will soon begin to respond in English as well because he/she will have the experience of the story in his/her native language and will have a context for most of the events. This simple activity will help the child to begin to develop literacy in his/her native language and this foundation will facilitate the acquisition of literacy in English also. Teachers could vary management procedures to do the French Creole reading to smaller groups if they felt uncomfortable of doing it in whole class groups.
5. During individual conferences with the French Creole speaking child, you can build on the development of these literacy abilities, giving the child a chance to articulate his/her thoughts in the home [or native] language and in English also. This will not only help to develop positive attitudes towards language, but it will also facilitate the acquisition of English for school use.
 6. If the child speaks an English vernacular/dialect, provide a rich literature foundation, taking care to ensure that several selections incorporate culturally relevant materials, including, for example, dialogue in the vernacular. The representation of these dialogues will provide the opportunity for the child to become aware of the differences between the different language varieties, and will also help the children to understand the roles and purposes of the varieties that they hear in their communities.
- In any event, the curriculum is predicated on a rich reading programme that incorporates a variety of reading materials of different text types. The development of literacy in any language requires the reading of the literature of that language. The more children are helped to read with understanding, the better their literacy development will be.

2.1.2 An elaborated French Creole programme

The elaborated programme for French Creole speakers is only given in outline here, since its application would require consultation with the developers of the programme and careful training and application. However, the programme is mentioned here because evidence has shown that the difference between French Creole and English is significant enough to allow children to benefit from instruction to help them read in their native language, even as they are immersed in English and attempt to acquire it for communicative purposes initially. The programme suggests instruction for one-and-a-half hours a day to give the children the opportunity to develop literacy abilities in it. The children could be given the opportunity to:

- & listen to stories in the Creole, to talk about them and their relevance to their own experiences;
- & give their news in Creole and have the teacher write this down (using the same procedures as suggested for English in this curriculum);
- & illustrate their stories and to talk about them using the Creole;
- & begin to learn the sound/symbol correspondences for the Creole (some of the correspondences are identical to English e.g. a - cat; a - chat; o - bone; o - zo; and several of the consonant sounds are also identical).

The children would pick up very quickly these sounds within the Creole contexts that they are familiar with and would begin to develop literacy in their native language even as exposure to the activities suggested for English in this curriculum would help them to acquire English for communication. The literacy related skills would transfer quite easily as they learned to read English. The effect would be

that the children would be bi-literate, that is, they would be able to read both the French Creole and English, and they would also do much better at acquiring literacy in English and using it for school purposes. This ability would increase their cognitive flexibility and enable them to gain much more out of their learning experiences at school.

A typical school day could therefore be devoted to

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|---|---|---|
| 1½ hours of French Creole | - | for the purposes of developing literacy related abilities and for using the language for the exploration of selected curriculum concepts initially. |
| 3½ to 4 hours of instruction in English | - | for the development of English for school purposes - an integrated curriculum would allow for coverage of the required subject areas. |

The details for implementing such a programme cannot be ad hoc, but must be carefully undertaken in the right conditions and with the right support.

2.1.3. Dialect speakers/vernacular speakers

Some suggestions for non-standard dialect speakers have been given under Section 2.1. Here these are elaborated to indicate the benefits that would be derived if these speakers were to be exposed to a rich, culturally relevant literature-based programme. Studies elsewhere have indicated that when children are made aware of the differences in the structures of two varieties they benefit more in terms of acquiring the English needed for school purposes. The general recommendations for that group of children are that:

they be allowed initially to express themselves in their home language (i.e. without efforts being made to 'correct' their speech or to punish them for it). However, but through exposure to the oral language programme presented particularly in the listening/speaking section of the curriculum they be gently guided to the acquisition of the standard variety for school purposes.

Stories in which expressive and colourful dialect/vernaculars are used in dialogue or as the medium of the narrative may be among those selected to be read to the children and these opportunities be used for highlighting differences and for appreciating the power of these varieties for creative/expressive purposes - these objectives can be realized through the inclusion of role plays and other selected activities delineated in the curriculum.

2.2. Catering to different learning styles

Nunan² defines learning style as “any individual’s preferred ways of going about learning.” He goes on to explain that variables such as personality, psychological and cognitive make-up, socio-cultural background and educational experience are factors that influence one’s learning style. Research on language learning styles place learners into the following categories which have been summarized by Nunan as follows: (p.170).

Concrete learners: those who like games, pictures, videos, using cassettes. Practicing in pairs.

Analytical learners: those who like to study grammar, read newspapers and work on problems set by the teacher

Communicative learners: those who like to learn by watching and listening to those who speak the language to be learned and who use it outside of class

Authority-oriented learners: those who prefer the teacher to explain everything, who like to write everything in a notebook, study grammar, learn by reading and learn new words by seeing them.

These language learning styles reflect general learning styles. In any one class we are likely to have students who learn in different ways yet it happens that we do not vary our teaching styles to accommodate all learners. If we present most of our lessons by explaining, writing on the board and having students fill in worksheets, we would be catering to most of the authority-oriented learners, some of the analytical learners, but we would lose the interest of most of our communicative learners and would not engage the concrete learners at all. What this suggests is that we must vary our materials and method of presentation so that all students will be engaged and interested in the learning activities. While there is need for us to present information and explain concepts in a way that students can understand, we must also allow students to practise using the language, have opportunities to interact with their classmates, have opportunities to talk, to discuss issues and concepts, use varied materials to present their ideas, use worksheets as well as longer essays as well as other formats of presentation that are suitable, use a variety of materials for visual and oral support. This means that we must plan our work for each day carefully so that we include activities that will appeal to learners of all learning styles. If we present information of different types and design activities that cater to the different styles, we will also be teaching to both sides of the brain, which is yet another learning factor with which we must be concerned.

The hemispheres of the brain have different functions. The left hemisphere is said to be more analytical and the right more “social”. If both sides are engaged fully in learning concepts then the learning will be more efficient. So it has been said that while just listening to language will engage the left hemisphere more completely, looking at a visual will engage the right hemisphere and will provide another perspective and clarity for the language that was expressed. This therefore suggests to us that we should not simply depend on talk, verbal explanations and writing on the board when we teach. We must find the instructional support material that will help all learners understand the concepts that they must learn. We must explain, have them listen to other types of support materials, look at images that will provide additional stimulus and perspective. In that way we will be providing the right conditions and environment for complete learning and we will make learning more interesting and enjoyable for our students. The Harmonized Curriculum is predicated on this understanding and the teaching activities as well as the resources that have been suggested have been designed to promote the engagement of all students and both hemispheres of the brain.

² Nunan, David. 1991. Language Teaching Methodology. New York: Prentice Hall, p.168.

3. Classroom management procedures

- 3.1. Managing the timetable to facilitate integration
- 3.2. Interaction patterns
- 3.3. Using task boards for organizing activity selection (and flow)
- 3.4. The use of learning centres in the classroom –
- 3.5. Individualizing instruction
- 3.6. Collaborative grouping – purpose and benefits

4. Establishing home/school programmes, purposes and benefits

5. Extended notes on various teaching and learning concepts

5.1 Thematic approaches and the development of integrated (thematic) units

One of the ways in which integration of the language arts can be facilitated is through the use of themes that will allow for the incorporation of all the language domains. The selection of themes is not difficult because the work done in the language arts and in subjects across the curriculum present several ideas for themes to be covered. Themes that are done at one level can also be introduced at another if they are modified with regard to the range of topics to be covered as well as the scope and depth in which they will be covered. Themes enable us to integrate the domains of the language arts since they allow for scope of coverage of all the domains. They also enable us to integrate across the curriculum through the selection of materials and the presentation of concepts within the basic framework of understanding and expression that are the broad learning profiles of the language arts. The important point in the selection and the design of thematic units must be to ensure that the teaching and learning programmes are well balanced and that the activities complement each other. The matter of planning is dealt with in detail in Section 5.2.

- A. The first task that must be undertaken is the selection of themes that will interest the students. While it is important for us to select some themes beforehand and to plan for teaching before the beginning of the term, we can also involve our students in the selection of themes that will be covered later by (a) observing the things that interest them, (b) asking them for their input, [e.g. What would you like to learn about?] and (c) examining the entire curriculum to identify the topics that need to be covered and incorporating them as themes or as components of themes.
- B. The second task is to select a theme and design it to ensure that we are including the Key categories and domains that are required for instruction in the language arts and that are set out in the first column of the Harmonized Curriculum. This particular activity will start us thinking about the broad areas of the language arts, namely, oral language, written language and visual language, as well as the material that will be used as *input* and the activities that students will be expected to engage in that will constitute the *output*³ within these areas.

³ Iversen and Depree. 1994. *Early Literacy in the Classroom*. New Zealand: Land's End Publishing, p.7.

- C. The third task will involve the planning of the teaching and learning activities and the search for some of the material that will be used in these activities. While additional material will need to be obtained for the lessons, it is a good idea to start identifying some of the material that will be needed at this stage. We also need to determine the approximate length of time that will be spent on a theme. If we are integrating across the curriculum which means that we can rearrange the timetable to allow for a full day's work without the time slots, then one week will be sufficient for complete coverage of a unit. However, we must allow for flexibility, both in terms of coverage and in terms of the lesson plans. Sometimes, student interest leads to additional work in some areas and when that happens we must be flexible enough to allow for that to happen.
- D. The fourth task

- E.

5.2 Planning for teaching Grades K to VI.

5.3 Developing Phonemic awareness

What is phonemic awareness? The International Reading Association offers the following as an explanation: *Phonemic awareness is typically described as an insight about oral language and in particular about the segmentation of sounds that are used in speech communication. Phonemic awareness is characterized in terms of the facility of the language learner to manipulate the sounds of oral speech. To be precise, phonemic awareness refers to an understanding about the smallest units of sound that make up the speech stream: phonemes.* The term is sometimes used interchangeably with phonological awareness. The following indicate some findings about phonemic awareness and its relation to the acquisition of reading abilities.⁴

- 1 Phonemic awareness predicts success in reading and it supports the child's understanding of the alphabetic principle.
- 2 Different children may need different amounts and forms of phonemic awareness.
- 3 Although phonemic awareness is necessary it is not sufficient for producing good readers.
- 4 The acquisition of phonemic awareness occurs over time and develops gradually into more sophisticated levels of control.
- 5 There is a reciprocal relationship between the development of phonemic awareness and learning to read.
- 6 Most children, (approximated at over 80%) develop phonemic awareness by the middle of the first grade [i.e. if appropriate opportunities and activities which foster the development of phonemic awareness are made available to children,

⁴ *Phonemic Awareness and the Teaching of Reading: A Position Statement from the Board of Directors of the International Reading Association.*. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association. Pamphlet

or if they have had exposure to print - in reading for enjoyment activities with parents/care givers before they enter school]

Children in the Kindergarten programme should be given many opportunities and be allowed to engage in several activities that teach them about rhyme, beginning sounds and syllables. These should be incorporated within a balanced literacy programme that includes much exposure to print for the purposes outlined in this curriculum. The activities suggested in the several domains are also designed to develop the acquisition of phonemic awareness and the ability to read.

Phonemic awareness should be developed in progressive stages. It includes segmenting and blending, and children need to do both (Fox 1996). To foster children's awareness of phonemes, engage them in games that encourage word play, rhyming, blending, segmenting, and all manner of play with the initial, final and medial sounds of words. To complement activities that are specifically designed for developing phonemic awareness, find ways to direct the students' attention to the sounds of words in their daily interactions with language print. The following are some suggestions based on research findings.⁵

- i) Programmes that focus both on interaction with print and explicit attention to sound structure have the greatest impact on the development of phonemic awareness.
- ii) Offer students a print-rich environment in which they can interact.
- iii) Have students engage with print as readers and writers.
- iv) Present children with language activities that focus on both the form and content of spoken and written language.
- v) Provide children with explicit explanations that will support their discovery of the alphabetic principle.
- vi) Provide several opportunities daily for students to practise reading and writing for real reasons in a variety of contexts so as to promote their fluency and independence (as readers and writers and as learners)⁶.
- vii) Other activities that develop phonemic awareness include the following:
 - gradually move from larger, easier phonological concepts to smaller more subtle ones.
 - share stories, poems, songs and dances that play with language sounds and patterns
 - engage the children in games that combine phonemic play with meaning (e.g. I see something yellow whose name begins with 'm')
 - engage the children in games that encourage word play and rhyming, blending of syllables and phonemes, segmenting initial, final and medial phonemes
 - pay attention to sound elements with words by clapping syllables, manipulating magnetic letters and manipulating tokens to match sounds or to match sounds during slow word articulation
 - engage students in segmenting activities such as tapping and counting sounds in words and using Elkonin boxes to illustrate how to segment words into sounds
 - engage children in blending activities e.g. /c/a/t/ = cat
 - use rhymes, tongue twisters e.g.:

⁵ The suggestions listed here are taken from the Pamphlet *Phonemic Awareness and the Teaching of Reading: A Position Statement from the Board of Directors of the International Reading Association* - Columns 4 and 7.

⁶ A list of reading resources for teachers is presented at the end of this document.

A. There was a bee
Sat on a wall
It said, “buzz, buzz”
And that was all

- substitute other names of animals/objects and their representative sounds, e.g

There was a cow
Sat on a wall
It said, “Moo, moo”
And that was all.

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers
If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers
How many peppers did Peter Piper pick?

She sells sea shells by the sea shore
And the shells she sells are sea shells I’m sure

Teddy Boo and Teddy Bear
Live across the way
Every time they have a fight
This is what they say:
Ickabocker, ickaboker, ickaboker boo
Ickaboker, soda cracker
Phooley on you.

5.4

Teaching Phonics

The International Reading Association asserts: “the teaching of phonics is an important aspect of beginning reading instruction.”⁷ Researchers agree that phonics helps the learner to figure out the pronunciation of unfamiliar words. However, most agree that the object of any reading programme is to help learners become good, independent readers. Phonics can be effective in promoting expert independent readers if it is an integral part of the reading and entire language arts programme. Teaching phonic drills repeatedly in isolation followed by completion of work sheets is not likely to be effective. The following summarizes some of the findings on teaching phonics and reading presented in the IRA document.

1. Children learn to read by using ‘out of text knowledge’ such as their background knowledge, experiences and knowledge of language including sound-symbol correspondences. They also rely on textual information such as illustrations, and print on the page.
2. “When teachers share interesting and informative books, nursery rhymes, songs and poems with predictable language patterns, children develop and refine their use of these various information sources.” Note: The implication is clear - reliance on one basal reader throughout an entire school year will severely limit the learners’ opportunities to

⁷ *The Role of Phonics in Reading Instruction: A position statement of the International Reading Association.* 1997

- utilize knowledge from essential reading sources to develop their abilities as readers, writers and users of language for school purposes.
3. Through the direct engagement that children have with texts when they read and write, they learn how written language works and phonics takes on meaning for the learners in these various contexts of language use.
 4. “When phonics instruction is linked to children’s genuine efforts to read and write, they are motivated to learn” and they “are more likely to become strategic and independent in their use of phonics than when phonics is drilled and practised in isolation.”
 5. Knowledge of phonics is important but is not sufficient to help learners become independent readers.
 6. Allow for meaningful practise of sound/symbol correspondences that are still problematic for them.

5.5 The stages of spelling development and suggestions for teaching spelling

5.6 Dictation, its purposes and suggestions for its use

Dictation can be useful for a number of purposes. It can help students focus on the sounds of the language and to attempt to use accurate spelling. It is also a means of checking whether they are familiar with certain punctuation conventions, for instance, the knowledge that a capital letter should be used after a full stop and for proper names. In addition, it is a means of encouraging students to listen to language carefully and to record accurately what they have heard. Dictated spelling quizzes and dictated selections both have a place within the curriculum. Coady and Huckin (1997)⁸ cite Nation (1991) who suggested that students gain most value from dictation activities when the text which is used for dictation contains “known words used in unfamiliar ways” (p.250). The authors go on to say that the nature of the dictation activity is that it ‘focuses learners’ attention on the collocational relationships within dictated phrases’ (p.251). In using text selections for dictation, care must be given to the use which is made of familiar words within the text. Occasional dictated selections can help students to consolidate their information about words in their repertoires.

In addition to reading for the purposes indicated for construction of meaning and critical reading and thinking, it is important to help students develop speed and fluency in reading and to understand the texts that they have read quickly. The ability to read faster is developed over time and is fostered by specific reading activities introduced in the reading programme. To begin, a short selection which is at the students’ reading level is used (keep a record of the number of words in the selection). Explain the purpose of the exercise to students, viz. that the exercise is being used to help them become faster, expert readers. The following procedure is explained and used:

- a) ask students to read the text silently after you give them the signal to begin;
- b) tell them that you will record the time in minutes and seconds at intervals on the board;
- c) when they have finished reading check the time on the board; this is their reading time;

⁸ Coady, James and Thomas Huckin (1997) Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

- d) let students keep a record of their reading times against the number of words in the texts read in their reading response journals.
- e) check students' understanding of the reading by asking them to respond to some questions about the content; this can be done (a) through discussion (b) as an individual written task with students completing a simple multiple choice selection based on the reading material (without looking back at the text);
- f) you can follow up with additional class activities based on the text afterwards, if necessary.

Slightly longer passages are introduced in subsequent faster reading tasks. Students (and teacher) can thus monitor progress in relation to the time taken to complete selections of specific length. It is always necessary to check the students' understanding of the passages read so that the development of speed and fluency does not occur at the expense of processing meaning.

- 5.7 Teaching Listening and Speaking
- 5.8 Teaching reading and reading strategies
- 5.9 Responding to Literature
- 5.10 Developing speed and accuracy in reading
- 5.11 Product and process approaches to writing – and teaching writing as a process
- 5.12 Teaching grammar across the grades

[Sections to be completed]

5.13 Vocabulary development and the use of Word Banks

The word bank is a book containing lists of words that are recorded by students as they encounter new vocabulary in listening and reading and which they can use productively in their oral and written work. A Word Bank can therefore be described as a personal dictionary which individual students use to record new words learned and to monitor their vocabulary development. Through teacher guidance students can create Word Banks by allocating a small note or exercise book for this purpose. As part of a general class project at the start of the year, each student works on organizing his or her book and personalizing it. One or two pages are allocated for each letter of the alphabet and each letter section should be identified by using a sticker with the relevant letter at the top right hand corner of the page. The teacher must stress that the words need to be entered with accurate spelling, so students must focus on making correct entries and check, if necessary, before entering a word.

The teacher should model how to enter about five to eight words (at least two in the first four sections) and show students how they can include a note for each word they find difficult (where necessary) to remind them of the spelling; for example, if a word has two sounds which are the same, the student can highlight these by underlining or highlighting the relevant letters as a mnemonic that both letters must be included in both places. Students should be allowed to have free access to their Word Banks during writing tasks, and they should be encouraged to add new words as they learn them and achieve ownership of these words.

In addition to individual Word Banks the teacher can also develop a class Word Bank in which she records the significant vocabulary that is learned in daily lessons and which are focused on in class. The class Word Bank can function as a model to students and it can also be used as the source of words for dictated spelling quizzes. Gladys

Rosencrans⁹ indicates that Word Banks are useful because they: (i) “provide a personal dictionary (which students can) use during independent writing, (ii) provide an opportunity to write correct spelling, thus creating a mental image of the correct spelling of the word (iii) develop an attitude that correct spelling is important (iv) provide an effective, simple means of locating needed words.” (p.36). To this we can add that Word Banks help students develop confidence in using a wide variety of words and to develop true ownership of words. Rosencrans also suggests that “Students should be encouraged to look in their Word Bank before requesting assistance because the words recorded there are words that the student(s) are currently using in their personal writing and studies and are always therefore developmentally appropriate” (p. 37). This practice also leads to the development of confidence and independent learning which are fostered by a learner-centred curriculum.

5.14 The use of cognitive organizers in an integrated Language Arts programme

6. Additional sample activities for teaching selected areas in the various domains, Grades K – VI

6.1. Sample activities for listening and speaking

Kindergarten

Reference: Learning Outcomes, Section I – A. Outcome No. 4

1. Teacher asks students whether they know any rhymes. Teacher allows general discussion in which children talk about the rhymes [or poems or limericks – depending on whether selection is one of these] they know. Teacher allows children who volunteer to recite their rhyme [or poem etc]. Teacher can encourage students to talk about the selection they recited, e.g. say why they like them etc. Other students can also comment.
2. Teacher tells students they are going to listen to a rhyme and they must listen to hear what it is about.
3. Teacher plays a recorded version of a rhyme [or a poem or a limerick]. Alternatively, teacher reads the selection with expression. Children listen twice to the recitation.
4. Teacher asks children whether they can say what the rhyme was about. Teacher lets general discussion follow.
5. The teacher gives children opportunity to say the rhyme. She recites with the children.
6. Teacher tells the children she will recite the rhyme but she will leave out some of the rhyming words and she wants them to say the words she leaves out. She plays the recording [or recites the rhyme] one more time and then asks the children to listen carefully so they can say the end rhymes that she omits.
7. Teacher and children can recite together once more, and then teacher can ask them about their favourite part of the rhyme. Give children a chance to say what their favourite parts were and why they liked those parts.
8. Follow-up activities – teacher can ask students to:
 - § pretend to be the character in the rhyme. While she plays it over again let them role play what they think the character did

⁹. Gladys Rosencrans (1998). The Spelling Book: Teaching Children How to Spell not What to Spell. International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware.

§ distribute drawing paper, paints etc and ask children to draw their favourite part of the rhyme. While children draw teacher can play other rhyme recordings softly in the background.

Reference: Learning Outcomes, Category C, P. 11, No. 14

Domain: Listen to discriminate between sounds of the English language and speak to use the sounds of English productively.

Learning Outcome: Identify rhyming sounds and make up rhymes and rhyming patterns.

Activity: Let pupils repeat a common rhyme e.g.

One, Two
Buckle my shoe
Three four
Shut the door.

1. The teacher emphasizes the first set of rhyming words.
2. The teacher isolates the first set of rhyming words and says them aloud
3. The students repeat the rhyming words
4. The teacher and students together repeat the first set of rhyming words
5. The teacher isolates the second set of rhyming words e.g. “four/door” and follows the same procedure as above.
6. The teacher introduces a new rhyme e.g.

Come let us hop, hop, hop
To the ...
Never stop, stop, stop
Till we reach the...
7. The students complete sentences using matching words

Reference: Learning Outcomes, Category D, p. 12 No. 21

Domain: Engage in social/interactional exchanges

Learning Outcome: Listen to a simple message and deliver the gist of that message accurately.

Using a game e.g. “Pass the message” to achieve this learning outcome.

Pre-listening activity

1. The teacher calls child at random and asks him/her to do an activity. The teacher gives instructions to the child only once.
2. The child responds positively or negatively to the instructions.
3. If the child has followed the instructions correctly the teacher commends the student.
4. If the child has not followed the instructions correctly the teacher explains possible reasons why he/she has not.

Activity

1. The teacher selects a small group of students who will participate in the game: “Pass the message”. The remaining students in the class will observe.
2. The students in the game are made to form a circle.
3. The students are told that one child will be given a simple message and that he/she must pass it quietly/softly to the person next to him/her.
4. The teacher instructs the last child to receive the message to tell the class aloud the message he/she has been given.
5. The game begins with the teacher supplying the original message for the first child.
6. The message is passed quietly around the circle and the teacher has listened to the message that the last child says.
7. The teacher listens as well at the original message the first child now says.
8. The class and the teacher determine whether the message was passed correctly.
9. Students take turns playing this game in small groups. The teacher monitors each group’s progress.

Note: To develop listening skills
To encourage children to enunciate clearly a message received.

Sample Activity

Domain A: Listening and Speaking for personal response and enjoyment.

Learning Outcome: Listen to stories read to them (Page 10, No. 2)

Text: Cinderella

1. Chat about cover picture with class e.g. Why do you think the girls were dressed up? When do people go to parties?
2. With students in a semi-circle setting, read story to class, pointing to words (left/right directionality).
Stop at strategic points in the story, ask questions, and discuss the pictures.
Encourage students to join in the repetitive parts of the story.

Assessment: Ask questions to help students recall story.
Let them give the names of some of the characters.
Have students say: which character they liked best and why.
Which character they would like to be, and why.

- 6.1. Sample activities for reading – all grades
- 6.2. Sample activities for writing – all grades
- 6.3. Sample activities for grammar - all grades
- 6.4. Sample activities for vocabulary – all grades

[Sections to be completed]

7. Samples of complete integrated units for K through Grade VI

- 7.1. Sample with lesson plans for kindergarten
- 7.2. Sample unit with lesson plans for Grades I and II
- 7.3. Sample unit with lesson plans for Grades III and IV
- 7.4. Sample unit with lesson plans for Grades V and VI

[Sections to be completed]

Sample activities for Grade I

Reference: Learning Outcomes, p. 36. Categories A-1; A-2, Nos.1 &13

Learning outcomes: Listen attentively to speaker in conversational exchanges.
Use appropriate forms to offer and ask for assistance and advice.

Activity: Using the telephone to find out from the TV station what time their favourite cartoon(s) will be aired (different students will enquire about their personal favourite cartoon).

1. Ask students to state their individual favourite cartoon(s).
2. Teacher lists titles of cartoons on chalkboard.
3. Teacher states objective of lesson: - To use appropriate forms to offer and ask for assistance and advice.

Materials: 2 telephones, poster with name of TV station, 1 table (for receptionist), recorded conversation modelling how to request and receive specific information (from TV station using the telephone).

1. Teacher plays recorded conversation at least twice. Children listen attentively. Then through questioning teacher makes students aware of how/which questions are asked.
Examples:
 - What did the caller want to find out?
 - What questions did the caller ask to find this out?
 - What answer did he/she get/receive?
 - How did the conversation end?
2. Children can be encouraged to ask of the receptionist any other pertinent questions.
3. Teacher provides opportunities for students to role-play – first, with students being callers only (Teacher acts as receptionist), then, receptionists.
4. At the end of each call, role play is evaluated through questioning/discussion. (Teacher/peer evaluation) areas to be evaluated: tone, language
 - Syntax
 - Intonation
 - Form
 - Diction, social courtesies: greeting

Note: At all times encourage students to use complete sentences. (Encourage free speech by accepting L1). Ensure that students get adequate practice in order to develop language skills. Draw attention to social courtesies at the beginning and end of conversations and for assistance given, e.g. Thank you. The items outlined above can be used to develop a checklist for peer/teacher evaluation (oral assessment).

Sample activity – Grades V and VI

Reference: Learning Outcomes, p. 147

Domain C – Listening and speaking for understanding

Learning Outcome: Use appropriate and acceptable forms for asking questions, making requests, etc.

Pre-Listening Activity

1. View interviews on videos or role plays of interviews in the classroom
2. Write questions of topic. Discuss appropriateness of questions. Revise where necessary.
3. Prepare questions and practise in class interviews in preparation for the actual interview.
4. Pairs of children go out into the community and conduct interview – One student does the interview, the other conducts evaluation using checklist to determine whether student used acceptable forms. Checklists are prepared by both teacher and pupils.

Sample questions for checklist:

Check “Yes” or “No”.

- | | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Were questions relevant to the topic | | |
| 2. Were they clearly worded? | | |
| 3. Were they appropriate? | | |
| 4. Did they express ideas clearly? | | |

Similarly, for voice skills (Outcomes 58-61)

As children participate in impromptu speeches, debates, role plays on current topics of interest, teacher or designated student uses checklist to assess their presentations.

Sample

There was effective voice modulation.
Words were pronounced correctly.
Rate of speech was varied for effectiveness.
There was appropriate use of intonation patterns.
Vowels were distinctly articulated.
Pitch, tone, volume were appropriate to content and situation.

Note: Each statement is rated on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.

Sample activity 2

Reference: Learning Outcomes, p.146

Domain A – 1: Communicate to interact socially
Learning Outcomes 5-8

1. Let students listen to/view a tape involving use of conventions (appropriate or inappropriate). This can be a clip from a movie, for example.
2. Discuss with students what constitutes a ‘good’ listener, based on what was heard or seen.
3. Teacher and students work together to develop a checklist that will identify the qualities/conventions of good social interaction. e.g.
 - i) Speaks clearly.
 - ii) Expresses thoughts, clearly.
 - iii) Uses appropriate register.
 - iv) Takes turns.
 - v) Disagrees politely.
 - vi) Responds appropriately to remarks of others.
 - vii) Clarifies ideas.
 - viii) Asks relevant questions.
 - ix) Follows appropriate sequence/protocol.
4. Devise situations in which students role play situations requiring use of specific conventions e.g.
 - i) Giving/receiving a gift
 - ii) Making a formal/an informal request
 - iii) Addressing a respected adult
 - iv) Conducting an interview
 - v) Sharing feelings with a friend

Note: Role play can be done in a Fish-Bowl activity (See section immediately following). Observe students using the checklist to carryout peer evaluation. (N.B. checklist should be adapted to suit the specific activity.)

5. Discuss evaluations with students. Either a yes/no checklist or a rating scale may be used.

Fish Bowl Activity

This activity may be used to develop conversation and discussion skills.

References Grade V – Outcomes: 4, 5, 7, 8, 62, 63

References Grade VI – Outcomes: 5, 6, 45, 54, 55, 56

1. Teacher and students prepare a checklist reflecting the expected behaviours, e.g. taking turns, maintaining eye contact, disagreeing politely etc.
2. Students take turns to be the ‘fish’, that is, they sit in the middle of a circle formed by their peers. The ‘fish’ can be a pair of students having a conversation or a small group having a discussion.
3. Students in the outer circle observe the conversation/discussion and the students in the inner circle and use their checklists to note the behaviours they observe.

4. At the end of each conversation/discussion, students and teacher discuss what they observed and comment on the positive and negative behaviours.
5. Teacher can use his/her own observation checklist to evaluate students' ability to evaluate their peers as well as students' conversation/discussion skills.

Sample activity 3

Reference: Learning Outcomes, p. 147

Domain – C – Listening and speaking for understanding

Learning Outcome: Listening to predict outcomes
 Listen to predict outcomes from events described (Grade V section)

Activity: Directed Listening/Thinking Activity (DLTA)

The Directed Listening/Thinking Activity (DLTA) is based on the Directed Reading/Thinking Activity, a procedure developed by Stanffer (1975). In DLTA the teacher reads the story piece of literature aloud to students, who are actively listening by making predictions and listening to confirm their predictions. After reading, students discuss their predictions and give reasons to support them.

DLTA involves the following steps:

1. Pre-listening Activity:

Stimulate students' interest in the story by providing information related to the story or the author.

Option: Discuss topic/theme, show pictures, or share objects related to the story to draw on prior knowledge or to create new experiences.

Teacher shows students the cover of the book and reads the title and asks students to make a prediction about the story. The following questions may be used:

- i) What do you think a story with a title like this might be about?
- ii) What do you think might happen in the story?
- iii) Does this picture give you any ideas about what might happen in this story?

2. Listening Activity

After students set their purposes for listening, the teacher reads part of the story aloud and then asks students to confirm or reject their predictions by answering questions such as:

- i) What do you think now?
- ii) What do you think will happen next? Why?
- iii) What would happen if...?

The teacher continues reading the story aloud, stopping at several key points to repeat this step.

3. Post-Listening Activity

Students talk about the story, expressing their feelings and making connections to their own lives and experiences with literature. Then students reflect on the predictions they made as they listened to the story being read aloud, providing reasons to support their predictions. Teacher asks the following questions to help students think about their predictions.

- i) How does the story ending differ from your predictions?
- ii) How do you feel about the ending?

Follow-up Activity

- 1) Have students write alternative endings to the story. This can be done individually or in groups.
- 2) Let students discuss, and compare their alternative story endings.
- 3) Ask students to visit the library or other resource areas to find stories on similar themes or other stories by the same author.

Note: DLTA is useful only when students are reading or listening to an unfamiliar story so that the prediction activity involves theme in the story.

(Adapted from: Thompkins, G. E. (1998) Language Arts: Content and)

7.1 Sample Activities – Reading

Kindergarten

Reference: Learning Outcomes, p. 30, No. 2

Domain A – Familiarity with and use of symbols – spelling concepts

Learning Outcomes: Assign message/meaning to their own written symbols and read their own writing

Activity

- Recall the Cinderella story. Students will relate different aspects of the story which they enjoyed best.
- Students discuss the characters in the story and suggest which was their favourite character and why.
- Students respond by drawing/writing their impressions of the character or the story.
- Students 'read' what they have written about the story. Students share their work with others in the class.

[Notes: Teacher may write under children's work, the children's message that they themselves had read. Children's work may be drawings – stickmen, circles/other shapes/perhaps letters or words – word equivalents. It is recommended that their work be placed on the wall. This may be interpreted as recognition of their work. It is also suggested that a portfolio be developed for each child with samples of their work.]

7.2 Sample Activities: Writing

Kindergarten

Reference: Learning Outcomes: P. 28, No. 5

Write spontaneously for self (i.e. may use drawing, scribbles etc.)

Specific Outcomes: P. 30,, No. 6

Scribble, draw a picture or try to print letters to convey a message.

Re-Writing Activity

1. The teacher displays a picture of children in a playground playing together.
2. Class discussion takes place with children making use of oral language to describe the activity reflected in the picture.
3. Each child then takes a turn at describing a game that he/she enjoys playing.

Writing Activity

1. Children are then given the opportunity to draw and write about themselves playing their favourite game.
2. Children take turns in the “Author’s Chair” sharing their drawings and writing in print, with the rest of the class.
3. Children’s work is displayed in the “Author’s corner” of the classroom.
4. The teacher can function as to give labels where necessary to the drawings of author in the class.
5. The children are encouraged to celebrate each other’s writing and share about the writings they like and give reasons why like these.

Suggested Comment:

The use of portfolios is recommended so that the child’s progress can be monitored over a period of time. The teacher can establish a writing portfolio for each child in the class for this purpose.

Activity

Reference: Learning Outcomes P. 28, No. 13

Students identify (and attempt to write) the letters their names.

Specific Outcome: P. 30, No.10

Copy/transcribe letter from a variety of materials.

Pre-Writing Activities:

The teacher provides opportunities for the children to physically manipulate the letter that comprise their individual names through the use of:

- letters drawn from letter boxes
- sand paper letters
- sand craft where the individual names of each child are spelled out.

Writing Activity

1. The teacher provides a model for his writing activity by displaying his/her name on a flash card/or directly written on the board in a dot-to-dot form.
2. The teacher writes his/her name by joining the dotted lines provided. As the teacher completes writing his/her name the teacher says his/her name aloud.
3. The children are provided with individual cards with their individual names supplied in the dot-to-dot form.
4. The children follow the modelling provided by the teacher and write their individual names joining the dotted lines.
5. The teacher monitors individual students' progress with this task by careful observation, as they write. Observation notes must be made on each child and a checklist developed to record the progress and development of this writing behaviour.

Prior knowledge of class

- directionality of text
- knowledge of alphabet letters
- sound symbol correspondence

Please note: Pre-writing Activities stated above can take place in lessons/classes leading up to this writing activity.

Activity

Reference: Learning Outcomes: P. 30, No. 2

Familiarity with and use of symbols – Spelling concepts

Learning Outcomes – Indicate directionality of text, can point to where to begin

Activity

Resources: Calendar, news, stories

Students present their news while teacher records some of their responses on board.

Teacher models reading activity (teacher reads over story, alerting students to what she/he is doing. She points out where she begins, how she continues when she reaches the end of a line, when she reads and when she writes).

Assessment: Let students point out where we start when reading, and when we reach the end of the line, how we continue.

Teacher needs to repeat the activity done in the exercise in other instances (as the opportunity avails itself). This could be during Big Book story reading in calendar/news periods, when students, on their own initiative, take books to 'read' and any other instance whenever possible.

Sample Activities – Grade I and II

Reference: Learning Outcomes: Write down selections dictated by the teacher.

- Read over dictated text, reflect on it and make corrections.
- Use content to decide on correct vocabulary and spelling.

Pre-Writing Activities

- Children will be involved in auditory/visual discrimination perception of examples of minimal pairs, using recorded elements as well as their visual representations (on chalkboard, slide, poster etc.).
- Children will practice elements orally.

e.g.: [ɪ] short sound	[e:] long sound
sip	seep
lip	leap
hip	heap
rip	reap
rid	read
hill	heal
dip	deep
knit	neat
pit	peat
sit	seat
hid	heed
bit	beet, beat
rich	reach

[Note: Teacher may use the ticked examples for Grade I]

Content

(Definition of “minimal pairs”)

The concept “minimal pairs” refers to the variation in the sound of vowels usually in terms of their length, i.e. the difference in length of vowel sounds e.g. ‘bit’ and ‘beat’, ‘beet’; ‘live’ and ‘leave’.

[Note: Mistakes in writing can be made when vowels are incorrectly pronounced, e.g. ‘sheep’ when one means ‘ship’.]

Recorded Text

If we sit on a seat, we will not have fun. So we will wriggle our hips and lick our lips as we leap, then fall to the ground in a heap. (Text above will be written on a chart).

Text for Dictation

Dawn saw a juicy mango. She licked her lips and made a leap to pick it. She fell and hurt her hip on a heap of stones.

George told her, “You should not reap what you did not plant. Now your dress has a rip”.

Dawn began to weep for she was sure her mother would whip her. “Please let us leave now, “she said, “for we live far. We can slip through the backdoor since mother likes to sleep in the front room when she takes her nap.”

[Note: This passage can also be used to teacher paragraph writing, indenting, punctuating direct speech, for predicting outcomes e.g. What do you think happened when George and Dawn reached home?” It may also be used in moral education. “Thou shalt not steal” etc.]

Activities

- Dictating text with minimal pairs (target words).
- Whole class conferencing facilitated by teacher.
- Focusing on the clues that constrain students to spell the target words as they did.
- Rewriting/improving/editing/making corrections scripts.
- Shared reading/choral reading/paired reading (oral reading).

Follow-Up Lessons/Activities

(See Note To Teacher I)

- Maze technique
- Matching words with appropriate meanings
- Composing sentences using minimal pairs.

Resources/Materials

- Tape recorder/cassette
- Flip chart with text/story/poem
- Pencils, paper
- Text for dictation
- Picture depicting Dawne eating a mango

[Note: If the teacher is experiencing difficulty in articulating/pronouncing target words clearly, teacher, as model, must first listen carefully to the pre-recorded examples – text/choral piece. Students must be able to view teacher’s oral reading/modelling/choral piece paying particular attention to highlighted words while they are being read/modelled. In addition, students should be given adequate opportunities for practice during reading/modelling session in which the items are highlighted.]

Sample Activities Grades III and IV

Writing

Story Star

After reading a story, students record relevant details on a Story Star prepared by the teacher. This activity helps in reinforcing the common elements of narrative structure. The activity can be done in groups or individually and students can be asked to compare their stars. Discussion of differences may follow. Students should be encouraged to use Story Stars to map out or outline their own stories.

STORY STAR

(Place diagram here)

Story Frames

Teacher prepares blank Story Frames which she distributes to groups of children. After reading story, students work together to complete the frames. Activity could also be done individually.

Plot

The Story began when _____
Then _____
After that _____
At the end _____

Character

The major character (s) in the story is/are _____
The minor character(s) n the Story is/are _____

Setting

The Story takes place at _____ and ends at _____.
--

Theme

After reading this story I learnt that _____ _____ _____.

Expanded Activities: Writing

Punctuation Crossword

Teacher creates a crossword puzzle to help reinforce students' knowledge of punctuation marks. The puzzle would be made up of clues related to the use of various punctuation marks.

Examples of clues:

1. You use it at the end of a question.
2. I am used to show that something either belongs or is left out.
3. No statement is complete without me.
4. You use me to separate items in a list.
5. I am used after expressions of intense feeling.
6. I enclose what you say.

Teacher may construct puzzle manually or may go to discoveryschool.com on the Internet where can be constructed for them on the Puzzle maker page.

Extended Activity

Graphic Organizer for Main Idea

Students map out paragraphs before they write. The topic sentence/main idea is put in the centre of a circle and the relevant details are placed outside of the circle.

(Put in diagram Topic Sentence Web)

The activity can also be used to help children see how other paragraphs have been organized. This is a very useful activity for expository writing.

Paragraph Frames

These represent the five expository text structures. Teachers should encourage students to select cue words in each type.

Description: Students describe a topic by listing characteristics, features and examples.

Sequence: Students list items or events in numerical or chronological order.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Comparison: Students explain how two or more things are alike and/or different.

Cause and Effect: Students list one or more causes and the resulting effect(s).

(place diagram effect # 1 here)

Problem and Solution: Students state a problem and list one or more solutions for the problem. A variation of this pattern is the question – and – answer format in which the student poses a question and then answers it.

(place diagram Solution# 1 here)

Sample Activities Grades V and VI

Learning Outcome: Use appropriate logical connectives, effective transitions, linking words and cohesive devices correctly in their writing.

Activity: Selected passage with connectives and other linking devices omitted, to be inserted.

Sample Passage

John liked Susan _____ he did not want to take her to the dance. He had very good reasons. _____ he did not have money. _____ he did not have a suit. _____ he had not even the slightest knowledge of how to dance.

Note: Passages can be taken from textbooks and other reading materials and devices being taught omitted.

Children work individually or in pairs to complete passages putting in appropriate linking words.

Passages are read aloud and discussed, noting the different words that can be used in particular blanks.

Children are given other passages to work on. They may also select passages, leave out linking devices for their peers to work on.

Children and teacher make list of linking words and how they are used. These are written on Charts and pinned up in the classroom. Example of charts:

- a) Words to consider if you want to Change story direction: “on the other hand”, “nevertheless”, “however”, “where”.
- b) Words to consider if you want to keep the same story direction” “also”, “now”, “the next”, “in the same way”.

[Note: There are many ways of filling in blanks. Additional possibilities, lists of alternate transitional words can be recorded on cards/charts for future use.]

Activity

Reference: Learning Outcomes: Writing

Punctuation Play

P. 157, Outcomes: C18 - use appropriate punctuation marks and show adequate control over the use of punctuation. Students are presented with the following signs.

PRIVATE
**NO SWIMMING
ALLOWED**

PRIVATE?
**NO! SWIMMING
ALLOWED**

Students discuss the semantic difference between the two signs and the reasons for it.

In groups students discuss possible punctuation variations for the following:

1. slow men at work
2. michael cut the grass
3. call the dog nero
4. what is this thing called love

Groups report on the variations they came up with and demonstrate on the chalkboard how they used punctuation marks to change meaning.

In groups students brainstorm and create other ambiguous sentences and exchange with other groups for punctuation play.

8. Forms of assessment.

- 8.1 Assessment in an integrated language arts
- 8.2 Types of Assessment
- 8.3 Types of tests and their purposes (discrete, integrative etc.)

8. Glossary of terms used in Learning Outcomes document and Teachers' Guide

9. List of supplementary reading materials for each grade level

10. List of references for teachers

11. Implications for implementation

APPENDIX 1

Reflection on teaching practice.

Place an X in the appropriate column. Write comments in the space provided. You may use your responses as a basis for discussing the approaches you use with your colleagues.

Yes No Sometimes

Do I:

- i. allow my students to have time for uninterrupted silent reading?
- ii. make provision for blocks of time in which they can write?
- iii. provide opportunities for them to share their reading?
- iv. provide opportunities for them to share their writing?

Comments/Notes: _____

- v. give my students the opportunity to select books for reading?
- vi. allow them to select topics for writing?
- vii. use materials other than the basal [class reader]?
- viii. bring in magazines, newspapers, other interesting materials?

Comments/Notes: _____

- ix. use conferences for reading?
- x. use conferences for writing
- xi. allow students to discuss what they have read in groups?
- xii. allow students to share their writing in groups?
- xiii. allow students to respond to the writing of others and to give feedback [make comments]?

Comments / Notes: _____

- xiv. allow my students to use reading logs?
- xv. allow my students to use literature response logs?
- xvi. have my students keep a portfolio of their writing?
- xvii. have reading and writing workshops?

Comments / Notes: _____

Yes No Sometimes

Do I:

- xviii. organize teaching so that I have mini lessons for specific groups?
- xix. organize my class for flexible grouping?
- xx. use collaborative/cooperative learning?
- xxi. use centres for different purposes in the classroom?
- xxii. have my students share ideas about reading and writing everyday?

Comments/Notes: _____

- xxiii. share my own reading with my students?
- xxiv. share my writing with my students?
- xxv. make available materials that meet the needs of all my students?

Comments: _____

[Adapted from Classroom Observation Checklist, Workshop 1A. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development in cooperation with the International Reading Association]